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 Noble girls, during their *tiwheti*, must approach the
 oxen and look at them. The cattle might suffer, be attacked
 by a bad cough (*mukhulwane*), get thin! This taboo is instituted
 to protect the oxen, not the human inhabitants of the village, as D.
 Kidd says is the case amongst the Zulus. (Part IV. Ch. I. E.)
 When women have passed the time of child-bearing, most of
 the taboos cease, and they can eat monkeys and porcupine if
 they wish!

3) THE FIRST YEAR OF MARRIED LIFE.

I shall not return to the subject of marriage rites, which have
 been fully explained in the preceding chapter. Let me say that,
 though a Thonga woman cannot imagine life without marriage (*ku*
kandja bukati), she does not enter on the new state with any
 enthusiasm. Her parents have warned her that she will be
 illtreated, accused of witchcraft and adultery, etc. Her sisters
 bewail her fate on her wedding day in song. The fact that she
 has been paid for, though it does not constitute an actual sale,
 puts her in an inferior position (See Part II).

During the first year, she has no *ndangu*, viz. no fire-place of
 her own. She cooks for her mother-in-law. During the three
 first weeks the husband eats with her and with the girl who
 accompanied her to her new home. Afterwards, he goes back
 to eat with the men. In some places it would seem that the
 husband eats with her the whole year, until she has her own pot
 (*hlembeto*).

4) HUSBAND AND WIFE.

What are the relations between husband and wife after the
 honey-moon? Of course they vary very much according to
 the character of both. As a rule however, the married people
 have very little intimacy with each other; the man remains
 with his companions on the "*bandla*," the village square where
 they meet, and only occasionally comes into the "*ndangu*," the
 reed enclosure of the fire-place, which is the true domain of the

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⁸⁵¹ A demonstration of joy takes place at the birth of any subsequent child, but the kunga is only performed for the first-born. It does not seem that in the case of the first-born child, as in the case of bowumba (see p. 125) the gifts of kunga are subject to any taboo.

8) LOSS OF CHILDREN.

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⁸⁵³ A woman who loses an infant (wa ku felwa) is deeply contaminated with the defilement of death. She must bury it herself without aid from her husband. Next day, she goes behind the hut, kneels down and draws off her own milk on to the ground. She does this until the secretion has ceased. This is taboo; her milk is polluted; no drop of it must fall in the gardens. She must avoid crossing the fields and going to the storehouses to fetch food. ^{E64} Until she has been "put right again (busetela)," she eats with a spoon. To use a spoon is a bad omen for a woman, because it reminds her of death. That is the reason why men adopt this civilized custom more readily than women. During her mourning, no sexual relations are allowed. When menstruation begins again, she first keeps silent, and does not tell her husband. Only on the second or third occasion does she inform him of the fact. He can then purify her; this is done in the same way as in the case of widows. (See p. 154.) Then he buys new clothing for her and she resumes her ordinary mode of life. Everybody seeing her with this new attire will know that "she has been repaired." Should any one else than the husband give her this clothing, the latter will be greatly offended and accuse her of having relations with a lover.

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⁵⁸⁶ A man does not put on *malopa*, mourning clothing, for a child who was not yet of age. The woman alone does so. However a husband is always grieved at the death of his child and a sad event like this often leads to dreadful results. He will begin to think that his wife is a witch and has eaten her own child by her magical powers. Such an accusation is almost sure to end in a divorce.

A woman who has lost many children, three or four, is considered

361 in the bandla, and it is strictly reserved for them. Women are
351 allowed to penetrate into it only when they bring food. Boys
562 must remove the ashes from the fireplace, not women. The
 hubo, on the contrary, is open to all. A shed is sometimes built
 on it to afford shelter during the rainy days. There are special
 acts always performed on the hubo: the cutting up (shindla); the
 slaughtering and butchery of animals and the feast of "eating the
 head." The head of any slaughtered ox belongs to the men,
 and they eat it together on the hubo (See letter C.). It is the
 business of the young men to keep the hubo clean, and they
 sometimes assemble to pull up the grass which may have grown
 on it. In former times it was taboo to come to the hubo with
292 sandals. Sandals are used for hunting and must be taken off
 before entering the village.

Another place to which I have already alluded is the *bukwile*,
361 the "place of jealousy," where angry co-wives insult each other!
351 On our diagram it would be located between 5 and 4, for the
595 wives of the headman.

361 The Thonga village, this closed circle of huts, is a living
 organism. All its members form a whole whose unity is remark-
596 able. This common life never appears in a more striking form
264 than at the evening meal. Let us look at our diagram. In every
496 yard the mistress of the hut has cooked her mealies and her
 sauce in different pots, and, when the sun sets, she distributes the
 contents (phamela) in wooden or earthen plates. The largest
 is for the husband. He sits on the bandla with his companions,
 the other men of the village, and the youths waiting for the meal.
 All these plates, generally carried by small girls or boys, are
 brought from all sides to the men's gathering. All do not necess-
 arily contain the ordinary mealies pap; some are filled with
 manioc, some with sweet potatoes, etc. The men attack the
 first plate, all of them taking the food with their fingers. They
 pass on to the second and so on to the last. Meanwhile each
 mother has filled other smaller plates, one for the girls, one for the
 boys, one for herself. She has even sent to each of the other
 women of the village a little of her cooking, and the others have
 done the same to her; so each member of the community, when

361 he or she has finished the meal, will have eaten a little of all
 596 that has been cooked on all the fires. It is impossible to
 264 imagine a more perfect communism than this as regards food!
 476 I myself witnessed this custom of the evening meal in Spoon
 Libombo's village in Rikyatla. Amongst the inhabitants of the
 kraal there were two blind male adults, the wife of one of them
 being half blind herself; the wife of the other was an old woman
 who could hardly till a few square yards of mealies and ground-
 nuts, and keep the birds and the hens away from them. Spoon's
 wife and the wife of another man of the village alone were healthy
 and able to work normally. So the whole burden rested on their
 shoulders, as the share the other women could take in the feeding
 of the men was necessarily small. However I never heard Spoon
 grumble; being the headman, he made it a point of honour that
 all the people dwelling with him should have enough to eat.
 Everybody who has lived with South African Natives has admired
 their wonderful readiness to share any food they may have with
 those present. Even children are much superior in this respect
 to White children. I attribute this virtue to the community of
 food which reigns in the Bantu village, and which is certainly
 one of the most attractive features of Kafir socialism. Village life
 has not taught the Thongas merely bad habits.

B. MOVING A VILLAGE AND FOUNDING A NEW ONE.

621 Large kraals similar to the one shown in our illustration
 754 were more numerous in former times than now. It is rare to
 596 meet with such a number of huts and so many people under
 one headman. Why? Because, say my informants, the
 superstition of witchcraft has considerably increased in later
 times. Suppose the wife of one of the younger brothers should
 [787] die; the divinatory bones reveal that this death is due to a witch;
 they go so far as to designate one of the wives of the headman
 as guilty. No common life is any longer possible. The
 widower will move elsewhere and build a fence around his

622 but it must not become tyrannical. They must govern for the
 596 benefit of their subordinates.

584 This peculiar position of the numzane amongst his people is
 654 illustrated, in a striking way, by the laws of distribution of the joints of meat on the day when the headman kills an ox to feast them. The various portions must be distributed to the relatives according to the place which they occupy in the family. The headman, nominal proprietor of the ox, will keep the breast (shifuba). This is not only the sternum and the ribs, but most of the viscera which are contained in them. The tripe, the heart, the kidneys will be put all together inside the stomach, and constitute what is called *nkopfu wa homa*. The headman will probably send the heart and the kidneys to his wives (tinkosikazi, his queens!). The brother who comes next will receive one of the hindlegs; the third in rank one of the forelegs. The elder son will eat the second hindleg, and the younger son the second foreleg. They will eat this meat with their families, or houses (tiyindlu). This custom is very old (1).

Let us continue with the distribution. To the brothers-in-law, or to the relatives-in-law generally, the tail is sent. It is the portion of the sister. But it does not consist only of the tail properly so-called; it comprises all the hind parts of the animal, especially the rump (kondjo). The malume (maternal uncle) receives part of the loins (muhlubula). The liver is put aside for the grandfather and the old people generally, because it is soft and they have no teeth to gnaw the bones. The head belongs to all the men of the village, who must eat it on the hubo, as we have seen. They may give the tongue (ndjaka) to the old men. It

622 (1) This custom is illustrated in a very interesting manner by the relative position
 596 of the three clans occupying the South of the Bay. They are all descended from
 264 Tembe (See page 23). Tembe, the ancestor, representing the elder branch of the
 554 royal family, ate the chest. He was the superior (hosi), and this rank is still held by
 618 his descendants in the direct line. Sabi or Mpanyele, the second brother, or son of
 the second brother, ate the hindleg; he was established later on in the Mathuthweni
 district, between Tembe and Maputju. Maputju, the younger brother, head of the
 third branch, ate the foreleg. But he revolted against his elder brother and carved
 out for himself a kingdom which very soon became stronger than those of Tembe and
 Mathuthweni. Mathuthweni became more or less independent. But when people
 wish to remind the Maputju people of their inferior origin, they say to them: "Tembe
 ate the breast, Sabi the hindleg and Maputju the foreleg!"

622 is taboo for the women to eat it, or the under lip (See p. 184).
 596 From each limb a small piece is taken (tshumbuta) and
 264 placed on a skewer; it is the portion of the shepherds and of
 354 the butchers, (makotjo ya babyisi). (See the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 152). Sometimes the shepherds also receive the lungs and the spleen.

This way of distributing ox meat is called "ku tlhaba homu ba hamba milao," viz., "to kill an ox according to rule." Should a younger brother or a son kill an ox, he will send the breast to the master of the village, but he keeps all the limbs and does not observe the rules because, as he says: "It is enough to pay taxes to the chief of the country." Often one of the legs is sent to the chief of the clan.

Strange to say when a goat is killed none of these prescribed rules are followed, as they only concern the oxen.

622 These customs show clearly the position of the headman;
 596 he is the master but also the father of his subordinates, and their provider.

1) He must watch over the village (basopa, Dutch word *passop*, universally adopted by the Natives). During the night, if his son is away working in Johannesburg, he takes care that no lovers come into the huts of his daughters-in-law, (a langusa humbuye), and if he happens to catch one, he will make him pay the fine.

622 2) He is a true justice of peace amongst the inmates of the
 692 village, doing his best to maintain good relations amongst them.
 578 Suppose for instance that the pigs belonging to one of the inhab-
 685 itants come out of their enclosure and over-run the gardens of
 643 another man. This man will go and say to the owner of the pigs:
 "Such and such a thing has happened, please close the pigs' kraal more carefully." Should the same thing happen a second time, he will complain to the *numzané*. The headman will then go to the culprit and say: "You have not heeded the warning; you must pay compensation (djiha)." If the culprit listens to the "voice of the blood" (bushaka), he will obey and the matter will end smoothly; if not, the headman can only keep silent: he has no soldiers, no means of enforcing his judgment; the plaintiff will then go to the chief of the tribe to complain. The case will be

462 places the food (phamela) on plates of the size of small basins or dishes (mbenga). We have seen how she distributes it amongst the inhabitants of the village. When all have finished eating, the women wash the plates, put aside the pots which contain the food left for the next morning, and tidy up the yards.

519 Whatever we may say, the day has been a well-filled one for the women. They are very rarely seen playing in the day time. We shall see how they recuperate themselves in the evening.

II. Men's occupations.

462 As for the men, their life is far from being as active as that of the women. They have not, like their diligent wives, the regular continuous work of preparing the food, not to mention the care of the children. The duties which fall on them, and which they are willing to perform, only require of them isolated efforts from time to time.

462 As regards agricultural work, it is generally believed that 241 men leave this entirely to the women. This is exaggerated. Amongst the Rongas each man possesses his own field which he himself tills, and this is an old custom, a special term even being applied to the field thus tilled: it is called *mpashu*. He may sow seeds in it, but he does not weed it, leaving his wife to do this troublesome work for him and also to reap it. He makes only one exception in the case of the sorghum, of which he consents to go and cut the ears. But he helps his wife in other ways, for instance in the storing of the food; he builds the little huts used as 462 storehouses, prepares the *tjala*, viz., the mat stretched on four poles on which ground nuts are dried in the field, digs holes for the 251 *buhiri*, the shelf at the back of the hut where the basket containing the seeds is placed. His wife does not think him a lazy fellow at 462 all. When the harvest is finished, she takes the smaller cobs of 273 mealies (makunhula), those which will not be kept, or the grains of millet and sorghum which are found on the threshing floor after the threshing, and with them she prepares a special beer to

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291 as with their clothing! How often we have longed to see them adopt some peculiar costume appropriate to the climate and to their occupations! But when they cast off their belt of tails, it is to put on long trousers, and they all dream of a complete khakhi or serge suit! So they will build square houses, and this certainly has its advantages; the dwelling can be divided into many rooms and the different members of the family can all live under the same roof, which, from an educational point of view, is a good thing.

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361 The communism of food is also a splendid feature and calculated to fill the most sanguine socialistic dreamer with joy! But this custom has been severely criticised from a hygienic point of view. The habit of all phising their fingers into the same plate fosters tuberculosis and other contagious diseases; but I do not think it is for this reason that the custom will die out. In the modern Native settlement many different families live together. They are not united by any ties of blood. Moreover they are sometimes so numerous that such communism would be practically impossible. The golden age has passed for ever!

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461 With it has also passed away the merry lazy life of the half naked *munumzane*. The coming of civilisation has already deeply changed his mode of living, and the transformation will accentuate itself still further. I have heard Colonists cursing these black people, who believe that they can escape the law of work under which Europeans groan: "these niggers who think that they will be allowed to remain incorrigibly lazy fellows for all time!" I do not share this loudly expressed indignation. First the Native *doda* is by no means an idle man. He has his own occupations for the benefit of the kraal. Secondly, if his wants are few, and if he very soon reaches the happy state of a man who is not obliged to work, I see thousands of Europeans enjoying the life of a "rentier" as much as he does, and without any qualms of conscience. A South African trader who works hard to make his fortune, and hopes to leave the country as quickly as possible, in order to enjoy all the comforts of a European town, theatres, concerts and clubs, has not, after all, a much loftier ideal than the Native he curses... On the other hand, circumstances themselves enforce upon the Native that law of work and teach him that "dignity of labour" of which we so often hear. A civilised Native has increased his wants ten-fold. He requires the wherewithal to satisfy them. This is the only legitimate, the most powerful incentive to work. Fifty, sixty thousand Thongas, the elite of our tribe, are constantly streaming to Johannesburg, where they are considered the best mining boys. Many of them go there to earn

a special apprenticeship ought to be served to one of the queens of the kitchen. I cannot boast of having gone as far as that!

As a rule women cook only once a day, towards the end of the afternoon. The big meal is eaten in the evening when everybody is expected to eat till satisfied (*shura*), and what remains of it is generally finished the next day in the morning (*sihlula*). This evening meal consists of two component parts: the cooked cereals, and the sauces seasoning them. But the menu can be greatly varied. In most cases the cereals are prepared as *bupaa* (flour), or *mapa*, and the sauce, *murú* (Ro.), *sheshebo* (Dj.), is made of monkey nuts, ground and boiled in water, vegetables, India-pepper, tomatoes, shrimps, etc. Or the cereals, maize, millet or sorghum, may be only husked (*tihoekola*) and cooked whole; they are then called *tihobe* (plur. of *hobe*, the central part of the grain), and the monkey nut sauce is often replaced by beans or peas cooked together with the *tihobe*. All these dishes are very tasty and many White people readily eat the Thonga food, which seems to me superior to the Sutho.

However, I never very much appreciated the *bupaa* which the Thongas consider superior to the *tihobe* and which takes a longer time to prepare. The grains must first be soaked for several hours in water (*lobeka*) to soften them; they are then crushed, the husks being carefully removed by the winnowing process (*hehera*) in the *lihlalo* basket, which is spasmodically shaken by sudden jerky movements; the interior of the grain is then pounded until it forms a very fine flour, as light as the best Australian flour; the small round particles remaining are called *buse*, and eaten as *tihobe*, as the *bupaa* must be perfectly homogeneous. When it boils in the pot, the cook stirs it the whole time with a stick provided at the bottom with small cross bars, two to three inches in length; she twirls the stick with her hands in the same way as a man lighting a fire with the wooden flint, and this operation prevents the flour from forming lumps. The *lobeka* process gives a somewhat nauseating taste to the *bupaa*; that is why Europeans do not care for it, but Natives like it precisely for that reason. The preparation of *tihobe* is not so complicated, as no preliminary softening is necessary. It is a somewhat coarse food which,

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262 however, answers admirably to the wants and capacities of the Native stomach! When the bupsa of the previous day has undergone too much fermentation during the night, it is given to the dogs. A small supplementary meal is often cooked at midday : [264] a plate of vegetables, for instance. Or, if the pangs of hunger are too keenly felt, a little nfuma meal (p. 17) is eaten with honey. Any addition of this kind to the ordinary every day fare is welcome!

There are a few other preparations made from cereals : the *mbila*, raw meal mixed with water, the *ntlatsu*, a lighter kind of maize flour used for invalids, the *shimhimbi* made of Kafir corn which is the special dish for women who are more or less fasting during the confinement period (I. p. 42).

Thongas also know how to cook by steaming. They put a large plate (*mbenga*, *mu-mi*) on top of the pot and hermetically seal it with ox dung. This prevents the steam from escaping. Dung is a thing by no means to be avoided in the culinary art. They look upon it as quite clean (I).

Men have now become accustomed to ordinary ground mealie meal (*mugayo*) which Europeans use extensively as porridge in South Africa. They eat it in the mines and in the schools ; but women do not touch it and think it vastly inferior to their own *bupsa*.

As regards the husks they are called *budangwana*, a word which may mean : "that which is eaten by the dogs." They are given to the dogs, the pigs, and the fowls.

We shall see in the next paragraph how milk and meat are dealt with.

III. Drink.

271 Natives are fond of the fresh clear water (*mati*) running in the spruits of the Transvaal, but they also make use of the

(1) I remember on one of the Transvaal roads, meeting two converts of a German colleague returning from an evangelisation tour. I offered them a piece of bread, for which they were very thankful and they moved on some distance to eat it by themselves. I was much struck to see them, after having said *grace*, pick up a large piece of dried ox dung which was lying there and place their bread upon it before eating : they evidently thought it was much cleaner than the bare ground!